



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

ART. XX.—*The Miscellaneous Poems of WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.* 4 vols. 12mo. London, 1820.

IF we have unworthily neglected this original and admirable poet, we have but followed the example of our countrymen, and done our part toward the general wrong, which his merits have suffered. With the exception of the Lyrical Ballads, which were printed many years ago, if we remember rightly, at Philadelphia, and which are not now to be bought, not a single work of Wordsworth has been republished in this country. We have republished Moore and Campbell to their last song, and Byron to his last scrap. Hogg, Rogers, Brown, Milman, Montgomery, Bernard Barton, Barry Cornwall, Leigh Hunt, and a host more of minors, have covered our booksellers' counters, and been spread abroad throughout our land; but he, who has done more than any living writer to restore to poetry the language of feeling, nature, and truth, remains unread, unsought for, and almost unknown.

The principal causes of this neglect we apprehend to be, the incapacity of the common mass of readers to appreciate many of the most refined beauties of the poet; the defects into which he has betrayed himself; and the influence of the severe and unjust criticisms on his poems, which have appeared in that popular work, the *Edinburgh Review*.

We readily allow, that if a poet wishes to be read, he must write so as to be understood; and if he persists in being unintelligible, he must inevitably pass away into oblivion. But the remark is applicable only to intrinsic obscurity and nonsense, and not to that depth of feeling, which common hearts cannot fathom, and that 'heaven of invention' to which common minds cannot ascend. These are characteristics, which must necessarily mark all great poets, who must yet possess other excellences or attractions, more level with the standard of ordinary apprehensions, before they can become popular. Now it so happens, that Wordsworth's high and peculiar beauties stand alone and separate, receiving but small support from those auxiliaries, which secure a ready fame. They are accompanied by no winning tale, full of

interest and incident, no romantic legend, no wild and fitful story of passion, revenge, and death; they follow the pathway of no restless and gloomy wanderer, they are linked with the fortunes of no border chieftain or desperate outlaw; but are breathed out in lonely musings by the side of mountain streams, or in the bosom of solemn groves, or over some humble flower; they are spoken in the passing night-wind, the voice of the desert ocean, or the simple answer of a peasant's child. These are sounds, which, though listened to by many with enthusiastic delight, are heard but carelessly, if heard at all, by the generality of readers. They are rich things, which the world cannot value; and being our poet's only treasures, the world deems him poor. It has no sympathy with his grand abstractions, his poetical dreams, his

—— reverend watching of each still report,  
That Nature utters from her rural shrine;

and as he has little else to offer to its sympathy, it is no wonder, perhaps, that the fellowship between them has been small. This circumstance alone sufficiently accounts for his unpopularity; and will probably prevent him, at least for a long time to come, from being received into general favor.

His striking defects have stood in the way of his just reputation. We say his striking defects, because we really think them great and obvious. We have no intention of setting him up on the weak and narrow pedestal of our own partialities, as a golden image of perfection and worship; we mean not to pronounce his unqualified panegyric; we desire to render him, according to our ability, and our unbiassed conceptions of his merit, his due honor; and we are sensible that we shall rather defeat than subserve this aim, by pertinaciously defending his manifest errors. Among these errors, we should say that the principal, and fundamental one, is the extreme to which he carries his system or theory with regard to the offices and language of poetry. The system itself is true and beautiful, as we hope presently to show; but its own master has abused it. He is often puerile when he intends to be simple; and his tenderness sometimes degenerates into weakness. He is right in believing that the

feelings, imaginations, reasonings, occupations, and habits of those in humble life are proper subjects for poetry ; but he is wrong in compelling poetry to repeat their commonplace ideas, and seriously investigate their ordinary household arrangements and domestic implements ; and particularly wrong in making her blow a trumpet before every shepherd's door, and swell out into a vast importance those circumstances, which, if discussed at all, should have been treated with a brevity and indifference suited to their station. Then too he gravely uses many words and phrases, to which custom has annexed low and comic associations. It is no defence against this charge, to say that these associations are unjust and arbitrary, and that the words should be rescued from their company and dominion ; the words have taken their place, and it is proper that a definite place should be assigned to them ; they are stamped, and must pass for their coined value. It is as fit that there should be epithets exclusively employed to designate mean objects and ideas, as that others should constantly represent those which are lofty, affecting, and sublime ; and it is out of the power of the greatest genius to drag forth the former from their destined rank, and set them, with any show of justice or decency, among the latter. You might as well put the sutler of a camp at the head of the army, and declare that he had as good a right there as the general, and looked as well. It is but fair, however, that we should here allow the poet an opportunity of speaking for himself on this point, in an extract from one of his prefaces ; especially as his confessions are so candid, and his defence so ingenious.

‘I am sensible,’ says he, ‘that my associations must have sometimes been particular instead of general, and that, consequently, giving to things a false importance, sometimes, from diseased impulses, I may have written upon unworthy subjects ; but I am less apprehensive on this account, than that my language may frequently have suffered from those arbitrary connexions of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases, from which no man can altogether protect himself. Hence I have no doubt, that in some instances, feelings, even of the ludicrous, may be given to my readers by expressions which appeared to me tender and pathetic. Such faulty expressions, were I convinced they were faulty at present, and that they must necessarily continue to be so, I would willingly take all reasonable pains to correct. But it is dangerous

to make these alterations on the simple authority of a few individuals, or even of certain classes of men ; for where the understanding of an author is not convinced, or his feelings altered, this cannot be done without great injury to himself ; for his own feelings are his stay and support, and if he sets them aside in one instance, he may be induced to repeat this act till his mind loses all confidence in itself, and becomes utterly debilitated. To this it may be added, that the reader ought never to forget that he is himself exposed to the same errors as the poet, and perhaps in a much greater degree ; for there can be no presumption in saying, that it is not probable he will be so well acquainted with the various stages of meaning through which words have passed, or with the fickleness or stability of the relations of particular ideas to each other ; and above all, since he is so much less interested in the subject, he may decide lightly and carelessly.'

In answer to the latter part of this quotation it is sufficient to say, that words are the property of the public, and not of an individual poet ; and though the poet may exercise a certain degree of authority over expressions, which are still fluctuating in some of their relations, he has no power over those whose uses are definitely settled. Mr Wordsworth has himself furnished us with another answer, by avoiding in his later poems those words and terms, which we have taken the liberty to condemn.

Another defect of our poet is, that he talks too much. He follows out his trains of thought through all their branches, and to their remotest points. He appears to be either deficient in the power of discrimination, or unwilling to exercise it. We are presented with all his cogitations, whatever may be their character and value, and are left to make our own selections. Thus it often happens, that his beauties are to be dug up from the midst of worthlessness ; like fair statues, and bright gems, and rare medals, from heaps of rubbish and beds of ashes. There is no man, who, if he were to utter all the notions and fancies which come into his head, would not utter a great deal of absurdity, or at least a great deal not worth the utterance. And so it is with him. In the simplicity of his heart he pours out all its meditations, and of course they will not all be of equal moment. It is to be questioned, however, whether we are not gainers at last by this unrestricted freedom of expression ; whether many of his highest imaginations are not struck out in the course of

this profuse and careless creation ; whether we should not miss his bounty, if we could check his prodigality. If so, we say for ourselves, let us have both ; we desire no change, and should deplore an economy attended with so great a deprivation.

But here we will conclude our notices of Mr Wordsworth's defects, for we feel it to be an ungrateful task. Neither will we produce any instances of his faults, because that has already been amply done by the Edinburgh Reviewers. And now we come to speak of the third cause of his unpopularity, the treatment which he has received from that wise and witty, though often ungenerous brotherhood of critics.

We remember perfectly well the blighting influence, which their reviews exerted in this country on his poetical name. It shrunk away like an early flower from a relentless wind, till none knew that it had a being, except the few who were not to be shaken from their admiration of it by heartless ridicule, and who did not prize it the less because the sun of public favor shone not on it, and it was a shaded and slighted thing. Nineteen out of twenty of those, who were asked what they thought of Wordsworth, would answer you with a laugh and a sneer. Think of Wordsworth ! What should they think of him, but that he was a puling nursery rhymester, a rival of Mother Goose, a manufacturer of some scores of foolish verses about Betty Foy, and Peter Bell, and a boat shaped like a crescent moon ! Did not the Edinburgh Review say so ? And did it not quote line after line to establish its assertions ? Such was the general sentiment produced by a few biting sarcasms, and partial, mangled, and unfair quotations. The reviewers confessed, to be sure, that Mr Wordsworth's poems evinced genius, originality, and pathos ; and they made one or two extracts from them, which they granted were fine ; but they took care that their ridicule should obliterate the impressions of their extorted praise, and that the whole effect of their criticisms should be to raise a laugh against the poet, and prevent his works from being read or sought after.

They notice the 'Address to the Sons of Burns, after visiting their Father's Grave.' 'Never was anything more miserable,' say they ; and they quote one of the four verses of which it then consisted, and which is certainly rather

poor. But we will quote the last verse, and ask our readers whether it be so very miserable.

Let no mean hope your souls enslave ;  
Be independent, generous, brave !  
Your father such example gave,  
                                    And such revere !  
But be admonish'd by his grave,—  
                                    And think, and fear !

The verse quoted by the reviewers was afterwards expunged by the author, and is not contained in the edition of *Miscellaneous Poems*, which stands at the head of our article. This omission may have been made in consequence of the sneer of the reviewers ; but how much more generous would it have been in them, to have copied the good as well as the bad verse, and then advised the poet to separate them ?

They also held up to ridicule an ode, which, in our edition, ends the fourth volume. We cannot refrain from copying a considerable part of the conclusion of this ode, so cavalierly condemned, in which the poet consoles himself for the loss of youthful imagination, by reflecting on the gifts of maturity.

What though the radiance, which was once so bright,  
Be now forever taken from my sight ;  
Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower ;  
We will grieve not, rather find  
Strength in what remains behind ;  
In the primal sympathy,  
Which having been must ever be ;  
In the soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering ;  
In the faith that looks through death ;  
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And oh, ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,  
Think not of any severing of our loves !  
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;  
I only have relinquished one delight,  
To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
I love the brooks, which down their channels fret  
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;

The innocent brightness of a new born day  
Is lovely yet ;  
The clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober coloring from an eye,  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;  
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
Thanks to the human heart by which we live ;  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears ;  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts, that do often lie too deep for tears.

If this is not good poetry, we confess we do not know what good poetry is. But the Edinburgh Reviewers could not quote it. Was it because they could not understand and feel it, or because they were afraid that their readers might do both? At the close of the review, three sonnets, and some portions of the 'Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, on the Restoration of Lord Clifford,' are quoted with approbation. But, notwithstanding this lagging and ineffectual praise, their main purpose was evidently to jeer, misrepresent, and destroy. We might exhibit further proofs of this purpose from other articles ; but we have dwelt on the subject long enough. We could not, however, say less than we have done, because we believe that the undeserved neglect into which the poetry of Wordsworth has fallen in this country, is in a great measure owing to the criticisms of the Edinburgh Reviewers ; and because we believe those criticisms were penned with illiberality and unfairness.

We will now endeavor to point out some of the excellences and beauties, both of the poetical system and the poetry of Mr Wordsworth.

One of his great principles is, that nothing is beneath a poet's regard, which has to do with the mind and heart of man. We have one common nature. The external differences of life may induce various habits, may present objects of thought in various lights, and give birth to various degrees of refinement ; but they cannot destroy the original passions, feelings, and capacities, which are common to all men. The man of highest rank and most finished education must love, and hate, and pity, and be sorrowful or joyful, like the humblest peasant ; and we must all be affected by true and lively descriptions of these immutable passions and sensations



whether the subject of them be the peasant or the lord. Certain of this kindly interest, feeling its most gentle influences on his own soul, and desirous of cultivating it in others, as a bond of human fellowship and brotherhood, Mr Wordsworth has generally preferred selecting his descriptions from the lowly walks of life ; both because our sympathies are more usefully exerted in that direction, and because passion is there more simple and unsophisticated, more ‘ the thing itself,’ than in the cultivated classes of society. These sentiments are expressed in many parts of his poems, as for instance in the three following verses from Peter Bell.

Long have I loved what I behold,  
The night that calms, the day that cheers ;  
The common growth of mother earth  
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,  
Her humblest mirth and tears.

The dragon’s wing, the magic ring,  
I shall not covet for my dower,  
If I along that lowly way  
With sympathetic heart may stray,  
And with a soul of power.

These given, what more need I desire,  
To stir—to soothe—or elevate ?  
What nobler marvels than the mind  
May in life’s daily prospect find,  
May find, or there create ?

He does not give us complete pictures, however, of rural life and manners, but exquisite sketches, or rather what the brethren of the pencil technically term *bits*, which delineate some pathetic incident, or tell the story of a single affection, together with the feelings and reflections excited by the subject within his own breast. Writing in this way, he is of course free to choose his materials ; and these are of a kind to call forth pleasant associations, or such sad and melancholy ones as are not unpleasant. He seems unwilling to dwell on the scenes of squalid poverty and brutal ignorance, which are so often presented among the poor ; and who will blame him for opening his heart, and our own hearts, toward what is innocent and good in that condition of society ? His poetry sheds its light of love over their manners and pursuits, as a

rich setting sun pours its beams upon their cottages, gilding their torn thatch and ragged walls, and blending them with a landscape of peace and beauty. 'The old Cumberland Beggar' is a fine example. 'The Brothers' is the most touching narrative of fraternal affection which we remember. In 'The Idiot Boy,' he has failed. A mean incident is chosen to represent the force of maternal love in a simple woman for an idiot child, and the recurrences and dialogue are unnecessarily silly. This poem is the most conspicuous instance in the four volumes, in which he has driven his theory too far.

Nearly connected with the interest, which his muse takes in the feelings and concerns of untutored men, is that which she manifests in the purity, artlessness, and budding intellect of children. The little ballad, 'We are Seven,' which is intended to show with what difficulty we admit in childhood the idea of death, is a beautiful exemplification of his power in simple pathos.

His theory respecting the language of poetry, is like that which he entertains with regard to its subjects. The language in which real passion is really expressed, the language of nature and of life, he affirms to be the true language of poetry. He discards those high sounding words, which were once thought to form the only proper poetical dialect, and despises all that vain show and rattle of phraseology, which was considered indispensable to a poem, or enough of itself to constitute one. He selects those words and phrases, to be sure, which are best adapted to his purpose, and which declare in the most forcible manner the idea he means to convey; but he employs those which are plain and in common use, and equally avoids weakening a good thought by an affected and roundabout way of announcing it, and endeavoring to supply the want of thought by a profusion of parade and sound. In this principle we go along with him with our whole heart. Few things are more tiresome to us, than the jingle and flourish which many people call poetry. We think we should choose the penance of hairshirt and whipcord, in preference to that of being obliged to toil through such a performance as Darwin's *Loves of the Plants*. There is as much difference between these preparations of pomp and paraphrase, and true poetry, as there is between

the precise, complimentary, ready made speeches of what is sometimes termed a pretty spoken man, and the natural, energetic, appropriate and spontaneous conversation, which flows from a clear head and a warm heart. There are even many words and forms of expression, which, though once highly emphatic, have now, by hackneyed repetition, almost lost their flavor; and, like certain kinds of fruit in old orchards, have *run out*. In such cases, the language of fact again becomes the language of poetry, because it is the most forcible.

We might give many examples from the volumes before us, in which our poet has given additional energy to a noble thought by simple diction. The following is one of the Sonnets dedicated to Liberty, and is entitled, 'Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland.'

Two voices are there ; one is of the sea,  
One of the mountains ; each a mighty voice ;  
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,  
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !  
There came a tyrant, and with holy glee  
Thou fought'st against him, but hast vainly striven ;  
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,  
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.  
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft,  
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;  
For, high souled Maid, what sorrow would it be,  
That mountain floods should thunder as before,  
And ocean bellow from his rocky shore,  
And neither awful voice be heard by thee !

What sublime personification is here, and yet how simple is the language ! The last four lines are grand. They fall on the spirit like the slow and solemn notes of Luther's Judgment Hymn. We cannot forbear another specimen of a different character, in which the calm strength of conjugal love is uttered in quite an imaginative vein of poetry, yet at the same time in the plain language of sincerity.

She was a phantom of delight,  
When first she gleam'd upon my sight ;  
A lovely apparition, sent  
To be a moment's ornament.

Her eyes as stars of twilight fair ;  
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;  
But all things else about her drawn  
From May time and the cheerful dawn.  
A dancing shape, an image gay,  
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,  
A Spirit, yet a Woman too !  
Her household motions light and free,  
And steps of virgin liberty ;  
A countenance in which did meet  
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;  
A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food,  
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,  
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine ;  
A being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A traveller betwixt life and death ;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;  
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command ;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of an angel light.

But the great distinction and glory of Mr Wordsworth's poetry, is the intimate converse which it holds with Nature. He sees her face to face ; he is her friend, her confidential counsellor, her high priest ; and he comes from her inmost temple to reveal to us her mysteries, and unravel those secret influences which we had always felt, but hardly understood. It is not merely that he admires her beauties with enthusiasm, and describes them with the nicest accuracy, but he gives them voice, language, passion, power, sympathy ; he causes them to live, breathe, feel. We acknowledge that even this has been done by gifted bards before him ; but never so thoroughly as by him ; they lifted up corners of the veil, and he has drawn it aside ; he has established new relationships, and detected hitherto unexplored affinities, and made the connexion still closer than ever between this goodly universe and the heart of man. Every person of susceptibility has been

affected, with more or less distinctness, by the various forms of natural beauty, and the associations and remembrances connected with them ; by the progress of a storm, the expanse of ocean, the gladness of a sunny field,

The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

Wordsworth has taught these sentiments and impulses a language, and has given them a law and a rule. Our intercourse with Nature becomes permanent ; we acquire a habit of transferring human feelings to the growth of earth, the elements, the lights of heaven, and a capacity of receiving rich modifications and improvements of those feelings in return. We are convinced that there is more mind, more soul about us, wherever we look, and wherever we move ; and there is ; for we have imparted both to the material world ; there is no longer any dulness or death in our habitation ; but a sweet music, and an intelligent voice, are forever speaking to our secret ear, and the beauty of all visible things becomes their joy, and we partake in it, and are elevated by it, and gather from the confiding gratitude of surrounding objects fresh cause of praise to the Maker of them all.

The following extracts from 'Lines written in early Spring,' exhibit that part of our poet's creed, which attributes feeling to material things.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul, that through me ran ;  
And much it grieved my heart to think,  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;  
And 'tis my faith, that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played ;  
Their thoughts I cannot measure ;  
But the least motion, which they made,  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air ;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

The corresponding impressions of natural objects on the human soul, are illustrated in the four verses, which we shall next quote from a poem consisting of seven, in which Nature is represented as adopting a favorite child, and training her up by her own influences ; and these influences are fancifully extended to the corporeal form, as well as to the character of her pupil. She says,

This child I to myself will take ;  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A lady of my own.

Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse ; and with me  
The girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn,  
That wild with glee across the lawn,  
Or up the mountain springs ;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her ; for her the willow bend ;  
Nor shall she fail to see,  
Even in the motions of the storm,  
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And beauty, born of murmuring sound,  
Shall pass into her face.

'Tintern Abbey' is a variety of the same class. If we were called on to point out our favorite piece among the four volumes, we should name this. We can make no extracts from it, because we are certain, that wherever we might begin, we should not be able to take away our pen till we came to the end of the poem.

The animation and sense, with which Mr Wordsworth endues nature, breathe a living spirit into all his descriptions of scenery. In this walk of poetry he has been compared with Crabbe. Crabbe's descriptions are as inferior to Wordsworth's, as the lovely though lifeless image of Pygmalion was inferior to the same image, when celestial fire had sent beating blood through its arteries, a light to its eyes, a smile to its lips, and a voice to its tongue. They both describe accurately, and Crabbe with more minuteness, perhaps, than Wordsworth; but the scenes of the former address the eye alone; those of the latter, the eye and the soul. Take for example this picture of a mountain solitude, from a poem called 'Fidelity,' commemorating the same instance of that quality in a traveller's dog, on which Sir Walter Scott has written some beautiful stanzas.

It was a cove, or huge recess,  
That keeps, till June, December's snow;  
A lofty precipice in front,  
A silent tarn\* below.  
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,  
Remote from public road or dwelling,  
Pathway, or cultivated land;  
From trace of human foot or hand.

There, sometimes doth a leaping fish  
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;  
The crags repeat the raven's croak,  
In symphony austere;  
Thither the Rainbow comes—the Cloud—  
And Mists that spread the flying shroud—  
And Sunbeams—and the sounding Blast,  
That, if it could, would hurry past,  
But that enormous barrier binds it fast.

And who but a heaven taught poet could have uttered even these two lines, which we transcribe from 'The Pass of Kirkstone?'

While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,  
Sigh forth their ancient melodies!

Crabbe would have described this field of rushes as exactly as possible; but his was not the ear to hear them sighing

\* *Tarn* is a small mere, or lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

forth the same wild notes, which the Roman and the Druid listened to. And this we say without wishing at all to disparage his poetical talents, for which we entertain the highest respect.

We have made our extracts thus copious, not more from inclination than a sense of duty. We believe we can venture on one more; considering that so many volumes of poetry are before us, which have never been opened to our readers. It is one of the *Miscellaneous Sonnets* describing a morning view of London from Westminster Bridge. It will be perceived, that the same internal spirit is communicated to this picture, as to the preceding sketches of rural scenery.

Earth has not anything to shew more fair;  
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
 A sight so touching in its majesty.  
 This city now doth like a garment wear  
 The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,  
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples, lie  
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky,  
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.  
 Never did sun more beautifully steep  
 In his first splendour, valley, rock or hill;  
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!  
 The river glideth at his own sweet will;  
 ——— the very houses seem asleep;  
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!

It is the author of poetry like this, whom we have been accustomed to hear treated with derision or indifference. We trust that many have done so from having been kept in ignorance of the merit which they depreciated. Still, perhaps, there will be others, who in their gravity and wisdom will condemn our taste, and look down on the whole matter as puerile conceit, and a babble of green fields. Let them enjoy the sense of their superior sagacity. He who has studied Wordsworth, and imbibed the spirit of his poetry, can never be made to resign, or be ashamed of his partiality; for he feels that the principles, on which that poetry is founded, are strong and immutable, that its spirit entwines its roots with the fibres of the heart, and is as enduring and true as devotion and love. He knows, too, that however this poet may have



been disregarded, he has borne a most important part in giving its character to the poetry of the age; he knows that many of the poets, with whose writings this country is so familiar, have borrowed some of their sweetest minstrelsy from strains, which have reached us but rarely and faintly from the mountains of Westmoreland; and he is continually detecting plagiarisms, both in spirit and in letter, made from the volumes of Wordsworth, by those who have joined to depress him. He regards him, in short, as he would regard an intimate and intelligent friend, who could draw forth capacities, and excite reflections, which received but little exercise, and met with little sympathy, in the ordinary intercourse of life; who could address feelings, which had never been spoken to before, but had sat silently in his heart, musing, and solitary, and ignorant of companionship.

---

ART. XXI.—1. *Reports of Cases argued and determined in the Supreme Court of the United States, February Term, 1823.* By HENRY WHEATON, Counsellor at Law. Vol. VIII. New York, 1823.

2. *Reports of Cases argued and determined in the Supreme Court of Judicature; and in the Court for the Trial of Impeachments and the Correction of Errors in the State of New York.* By WILLIAM JOHNSON, Counsellor at Law. Vol. XX. Albany, 1823.

3. *Reports of Cases argued and determined in the Supreme Judicial Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Vol. XVII. Containing the Cases from October Term 1820, in Essex, to March Term 1822, in Suffolk. To which is added a Digested Index of the Names of the Cases in the preceding Sixteen Volumes.* By DUDLEY ATKINS TYNG, Esq. Counsellor at Law. Boston, 1823.

WE have prefixed to this article the titles of three series of legal reports, the authors of which are too familiarly known, in our courts of justice and elsewhere, to stand in need of any commendation at our hands. Our journal, on more than